

four- no, make that five- nerds in a basement by lovebeyondmeasure

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Bonding, Dungeons and Dragons, Ficlet, Gen, Good Babysitter
Steve Harrington, One Shot, he's not actually babysitting but y'all get what i mean, the boys have a nice time

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Steve Harrington & Dustin Henderson, Steve Harrington & The Stranger Things Kids

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Summary:

“We begin,” Mike said, affecting a mysterious tone, “in the town of Leafhaven, where three-”

“Four,” Dustin interrupted.

“Where four men looking for adventure have met in a tavern,” Mike finished, sounding annoyed. “Hang on, I don’t have a token for him.”

Steve is dragged into the basement by Dustin, to the other boy's chagrin. Things progress from there.

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Author's Note:

- For [springawake](#).

“Come on, I promise it’ll be fun,” Dustin said, tugging him towards the door.

“Dustin, I cannot believe,” Steve said, “that I am letting you persuade me to play nerd games with your nerd friends in a *basement*.”

“Well, it’s not like you were doing anything else, right?” Dustin said with a toothy grin. Steve walked through the door of the Wheeler’s house, feeling a surreal sense of *deja vu* as he was led, not up the stairs, but down, into the basement where he’d rarely been before.

“You brought *Steve*?” he head Lucas cry out. “Dude, what the hell!”

“No, it’s cool!” Dustain protested. “I already showed him how to fill out his character sheet, and he’s gonna be my long-lost brother! So he won’t mess things up! I’ll just show him what to do!”

“Won’t mess things up?” said Mike. *“I only planned for three players!”*

“So? He saved our lives!”

“I’m outta here,” Steve said, turning to go back up the stairs.

“No, uh-uh, you’re staying,” Dustin said, grabbing the back of Steve’s rugby shirt. “And we’re all gonna adventure and have fun.”

“If he gets to bring Steve, why can’t I bring Max?” Lucas hissed.

“For one, he didn’t ask, which, rude,” Mike said. “And also, Max said she didn’t want to play, remember?”

“So? Maybe she just said that because you were glaring at her!”

“El’s not playing either!”

"That's not the same thing!"

"How is it not the same thing?"

"She can't be seen in town, for one thing!"

Steve just stood there, watching the conversational tennis ball lobbed back and forth by two masters of the sport.

"Listen, I can just go," he said to Dustin. "Really, it's not like it's super cool to be hanging out in my ex-girlfriend's basement with a bunch of middle schoolers, right?"

"Hey, we're nearly in high school now," Dustin said. "And what else, I ask again, would you be doing?"

"Guys, hey," ventured Will for the first time. "He helped you guys, in the tunnels, right?"

The rest turned to look at Will, the smallest, the most fragile looking. He wasn't one to argue.

"Yeah," Mike said softly. "He did."

"We had to kidnap him to do it, though," Lucas said, sliding a look at the older boy.

Steve put his hands up in a classic I'm-innocent gesture. "I was just trying to keep you shitheads safe, remember? Not my fault your girlfriend's brother knocked me out."

"She's-"

"What I'm saying is," Will said, raising his voice slightly, "he helped save me. Save all of us. So I vote to let him play. It's only a one-day session, right?"

"Yeah," Mike said unwillingly. "Two, maybe."

"Then we're all playing," Dustin said, pulling up an extra seat beside his, next to Will.

Steve sat down as the boys prepared their sheets and dice, and Mike set up a board. They all looked at each other, Steve feeling out of place and nervous but, somehow, fond of these young nerds.

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“Four,” Dustin interrupted.

“Where four men looking for adventure have met in a tavern,” Mike finished, sounding annoyed. “Hang on, I don’t have a token for him.”

“It’s a good thing I brought one, then,” Dustin said, setting one on the table with the air of a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat.

“What are you playing, anyway?” Mike asked Steve.

“Better not be another ranger,” Lucas muttered.

“I’m, uh, a thief,” Steve said. “If that’s all right.”

“Sure, fine,” Mike said, looking down at the board. “Four men meet in a tavern, where a mysterious man comes to their table....”

THREE HOURS LATER

The die clattered to the tabletop.

“Ten! Direct hit!” Dustin cheered. Will’s hands went up victoriously, and Lucas punched the air.

“The leader falls to the ground, writhing in agony as his flesh withers from his bones. You have defeated the orcs!” Mike cried. Steve high-fived Dustin and Will, and Lucas begrudgingly raised his hand for similar treatment.

“What’s our loot?” Dustin asked eagerly.

“The wizard finds a cloak. It crackles menacingly when he lifts it, but there’s no apparent change when he places it on his shoulders,” Mike

intoned. Will nodded. "The ranger finds a knife. In its hilt, a shining emerald."

"Cool," Lucas whispered.

"For the bard, a set of red leather gloves."

"Do they do anything?" Dustin asked.

"Not that you can tell," Mike responded carefully. Dustin looked thoughtful.

"And what about for the thief?"

"Right, shit, the thief," Mike said in a normal tone. "This is the kind of thing that-"

"No, it's all good, I'll just take the XP," Steve said, shaking his head. He hadn't expected to get so into it, but this was actually kinda fun.

"No, no, you should get some loot too," Mike said, brow furrowed. "The thief finds- uh-"

"What about that shield the orc leader was using?" Will offered. "The one that repelled arrows and mage bolts?"

"Yeah!" Mike said, relieved. "The thief gathers the orc leader's shield, which is, uh, miraculously untouched by the fight that occurred only minutes earlier."

"Alright, cool," Steve said. "Do I have to carry it around with me everywhere now?"

"Nah, it can go in the bag of holding, right?"

"No, it disrupts magic, right? So it can't. So yeah, uh, you have to carry it around with you now."

Steve shrugged, then a thought occurred to him. "Can I wear it on my back, like Captain America?"

"You read Captain America?" Lucas exclaimed.

“Yeah, I mean, sure,” Steve shrugged, trying to play it off.

“See? I told you guys he was cool!” Dustin exclaimed.

“You can definitely carry it on your back like Captain America,” Mike said.

Steve, looking around the table at the bright eyes of the younger boys, thought for a fleeting moment that this wasn't just a bad way to spend a rainy Saturday, after all.

Author's Note:

For my girl springawake who requested a "steve harrington + shield for a drabble" and got THIS instead. Hahaha, whoops, "drabble," ha...

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